

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 03694 052035Z

22-11

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AF-04 NEA-07 PM-03 SP-02 NSC-05

NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 H-01 L-01 IO-03 PRS-01

OMB-01 ACDA-10 USIA-01 /067 W

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R 052007Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7580

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL TANGIER

USMISSION USUN

USCINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

FOSIF ROTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 03694

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SP SS AG MR FR

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEW OF SAHARA SITUATION

REF: RABAT 0261

1. WE ASKED JEAN D'ALBIS, QUAI ASSISTANT MIDDLE EAST  
DIRECTOR FOR NORTH AFRICA, TO GIVE US LATEST GOF VIEW  
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PAGE 02 PARIS 03694 052035Z

OF SAHARA SITUATION.

2. D'ALBIS SAID ALGERIANS SUFFERED SIGNIFICANT MILITARY DEFEAT IN SAHARA, AND ARE NOW LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT. ALGERIANS DO NOT WANT FULL-SCALE WAR WITH MOROCCO. THEY WOULD ACCEPT SOME FACE-SAVING DEVICE TO ALLOW A WITHDRAWAL. THE ALGERIAN EMPHASIS NOW SEEMS TO BE ON GIVING APPEARANCE OF WITHDRAWAL UNDER PRESSURE FROM BROTHER ARAB COUNTRIES. IT IS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT MOROCCANS NOT TRY TO RUB IT IN BY OVER-EXPLOITATION OF THEIR VICTORY. HE SPECIFICALLY SAID THAT IT WOULD NOT BE A GOOD IDEA FOR THE MOROCCANS TO TRY AND ATTACK MAHBES, SINCE THIS WOULD BE TOO CLOSE TO THE ALGERIAN BORDER, AND MIGHT CAUSE THE ALGERIANS TO BECOME REALLY FRIGHTENED, AND REACT RASHLY.

3. ALTHOUGH ALGERIANS APPEAR READY TO DISENGAGE FROM SAHARA AT THIS POINT, D'ALBIS INSISTED THAT PROBLEM WOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE SOLVED AS A RESULT. ALGERIANS SEE MOROCCAN CONTROL OF THE SAHARA AS A THREAT TO ALGERIAN GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS IN THE REGION. ON THAT PREMISE, THE ALGERIANS WOULD SEEK ANOTHER ROUTE TO TRY AND UNDERMINE MOROCCAN CONTROL. D'ALBIS SUSPECTS THE FOCUS WILL BE TWOFOLD. FIRST, CONTINUE TO ARM AND SUPPLY POLISARIO FOR A PROLONGED GUERILLA WAR. POLISARIO IS NOT TO BE UNDERESTIMATED IN THIS RESPECT, D'ALBIS SUGGESTED. SECOND, CONCENTRATE ON UNDERMINING THE FRAGILE OULD DADDAH REGIME IN MAURITANIA. TRY TO INSTALL A PRO-ALGERIAN REGIME IN NOUAKCHOTT WHICH WOULD THEN FORM A SAHARAN FEDERATION WITH ALGERIA AND THE POLISARIO. IN SHORT, D'ALBIS FEELS THAT THE ALGERIANS ARE NOT GOING TO GIVE UP ON THIS ISSUE. IT MEANS TOO MUCH TO THEM. THEY ARE JUST GOING TO REGROUP AND TRY A LONGER RANGE APPROACH.

RUSH

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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